



185 Berry Street  
Suite 5000  
San Francisco, CA 94107

December 16, 2016

The Honorable Al Franken  
United States Senate  
309 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Franken:

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the importance of eliminating discrimination in transportation and the crucial role that companies like Lyft play in remedying and addressing discriminatory conduct and destination bias. Ensuring that safe, convenient, and affordable transportation options are available to all individuals, regardless of race, gender, religious beliefs, or location is a core value of Lyft.

When we learned of the study referenced in your letter, we immediately reviewed its findings, which we discuss below:

The referenced study found that on the Lyft platform in Seattle, the average time for Black travelers to have a trip request accepted by a Lyft driver was four seconds longer than for White travelers (23 seconds vs. 19 seconds), while the waiting time until pickup was identical for Black travelers and White travelers. The authors found the findings relative to average wait times in Boston to be statistically insignificant, while the ride cancellation rate was higher for White males (8.7%), than for Black males (8.4%) or Black females (2.1%).

These same cities tell the story of the impact that transportation network companies like Lyft are having in traditionally underserved and low income communities, which are so often communities of color. In Seattle, 30% of Lyft rides start in underserved areas. In Boston, it's 40%. And just as important as where those rides start is at what time these rides occur— often after hours, when traditional transportation options for third shift workers are most limited. In Boston, nearly one in four rides occur between midnight and 5am, and a significant number start at rail stations. Such utilization is evidence that people are using Lyft to patch the gap in public transportation as they commute home.

Lyft takes allegations of discrimination extremely seriously. Any discrepancy of service experienced by passengers due to race is unacceptable. The gains in transportation equity that have been realized over the last few years since the widespread introduction of ridesharing cannot be our ceiling; instead they have to be our floor.



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To address this issue, Lyft prevents discrimination on our platform via education, monitoring and enforcement:

- As part of our rigorous onboarding process, all Lyft drivers must agree to abide by the company's anti-discrimination policy. You can view our video on the topic at: <https://help.lyft.com/hc/en-us/articles/214218517-Anti-Discrimination-Policies>;
- Lyft periodically communicates with our drivers to remind them of the specific elements of this policy and that discrimination of any kind may result in immediate deactivation;
- With real-time tracking of ride-data, Lyft has a built in process to ensure transparency and integrity on the platform by providing an objective record of behavior. Every ride cancellation triggers an alert, and drivers who cancel too many rides are removed from the platform; This has been, and will continue to be, a critical part of our Customer Experience policy.
- Passenger complaints provided to Lyft's 24/7 Trust and Safety team are quickly investigated;
- Lyft's two-way rating and feedback system quickly identifies drivers and passengers who have been reported for discriminatory conduct. It is worth noting that during the period of the study, the star ratings given to Lyft drivers in Seattle and in Boston were the same regardless of the race of the traveler.

Deactivation from the Lyft platform will result if any of the screening methods described above demonstrate discrimination against passengers or drivers on the basis of race, national origin, religion, gender, gender identity, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, age, or sexual orientation.

Since the release of the study referenced in your letter, Lyft sent a message to all drivers encouraging them to discuss this issue with their passengers and reminding them of their obligations under Lyft's anti-discrimination policies. We have also provided a way for drivers to share their experiences and suggestions on this topic.

Also, moving forward we will enhance our regular thorough review of ride cancellations (as noted above), by including a focus on cancellation rates and quality of service in "minority census tracts" as defined in 12 USCS § 4502 (a census tract that has a minority population of at least 30 percent and a median income of less than 100 percent of the area median income).

In addition to expanding access to transportation, enhancing safety is another of Lyft's core values. Our business model depends on drivers and riders being safe and secure. Our commitment to transparency mandates that every Lyft user knows instantly who their driver is (via name and photo identification) and what vehicle he or she is driving (via a vehicle photo and license plate number). This "digital trust profile" also protects our drivers, ensuring that the person they allow into their car is the same person who requested a ride via our platform. As a result of Lyft's high safety standards, 30% of our drivers and 60% of our passengers are female, and more than 99% of our passengers agree Lyft rides are safe and friendly spaces. Technology enabled transparency is what makes both men and women feel safe in their Lyft ride.

Lyft will always consider ways to improve our ride-share platform, including to ensure against



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discriminatory conduct. To this end, we continually monitor our platform and review external studies and our own internal data sets looking for individual acts or patterns of behavior. Thank you for your feedback and ideas, we will always be open to exploring changes when needed to root out discriminatory conduct.

We appreciate your commitment to this issue and look forward to continuing the discussion with you and your staff to find ways to eliminate discrimination in ride-sharing. Like you, we reject the premise that discrimination is impossible to prevent or deter. Transparency and vigilance are the best cure for identifying and dis-incentivizing behavior that continues to perpetuate inequality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Logan Green".

Logan Green